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DEDICATION

OF THE

ROOMS

OF THE

Providence Young Men's Christian Association,

MONDAY EVENING, JANUARY 30, 1854.

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Large Duplicate

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PROVIDENCE YOUNG MENS' CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION,

MONDAY EVENING, JANUARY 30, 1854.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE ASSOCIATION.



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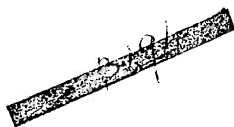
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DEDICATION.

Monday evening, January 30th, witnessed one of the most enthusiastic gatherings of young men, at the rooms of the above Association, that has been witnessed in our city, for many years, especially when we take into account the spirit and object of this meeting. The rooms were filled to their utmost capacity, and notwithstanding the storm without, there was sunshine and glad hearts within. The apartments are commodious and inviting in their arrangement, and well adapted it would seem, to induce the young men of our city,—all of whom have the privilege whether members of the Association or not,—to spend their leisure hours in a place designed for the mental, but more especially the spiritual improvement of those who gather there.

The President of the Association, A. C. Barstow, Esq., called the meeting to order, stating at the same time, that it was a special meeting to consecrate these rooms to the purposes for which they were designed. I should much prefer, said the President, as these exercises are to be devotional in their character, to leave the chair and call upon some of the clergy present, to conduct the exercises ; but the Constitution provides that the President of the Association shall preside at all the meetings, and also that the meetings shall be opened with reading of the Scriptures and prayer, and be closed with prayer and singing. Under these circumstances, and with all due deference to the clergymen present, it was thought best that this meeting should be conducted according to our usual custom.

The following hymn was then read by the President, from the "Temple Melodies," which are provided for the use of the Association, and sung by all present.

Gratitude.

THE MERCY SEAT.

From ev'ry stormy wind that blows,
From ev'ry swelling tide of woes,
There is a calm, a sure retreat,
'Tis found beneath the mercy-seat.

There is a place where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness on our heads,
A place, than all besides more sweet,
It is the blood-bought mercy-seat.

There is a place where spirits blend,
Where friend holds fellowship with friend ;
Tho' sunder'd far, by faith they meet
Around one common mercy-seat.

There, there, on eagle-wings we soar,
And sin and sense molest no more,
And heaven comes down our souls to greet,
And glory crowns the mercy-seat.

Oh ! let my hand forget her skill,
My tongue be silent, cold and still ;
This throbbing heart forget to beat,
If I forget the Mercy-seat.

At the conclusion of the hymn the President read the thirteenth chapter of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. Rev. Mr. Dow offered the opening prayer, after which, another hymn was sung, as follows :

Golden Hill.

CHRISTIAN WATCHFULNESS.

A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify ;
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky ;—

To serve the present age,
 My calling to fulfill;—
 Oh! may it all my powers engage
 To do my Master's will.

Arm me with jealous care,
 As in thy sight to live;
 And Oh! thy servant, Lord! prepare
 A strict account to give.

Help me to watch and pray,
 And on thyself rely,—
 Assured, if I my trust betray,
 I shall forever die.

At the conclusion of the above exercises, the President rose and addressed the audience as follows:

“It might reasonably be expected that this Association should have some organ through whom a statement should be made respecting the ends which it proposes to accomplish, and the means which have been chosen to promote those ends. This I shall endeavor to do as briefly as possible, and after this statement you will have the pleasure of listening to addresses from Rev. Mr. Wolcott, Rev. Dr. Wayland, and Rev. Mr. Allyn. At the conclusion of these addresses, the dedicatory prayer will be offered by Rev. Dr. Leavitt, after which, if there is time—we shall be happy to hear from other gentlemen present.

The object of this Association is clearly defined in the Preamble of its Constitution—“to promote *evangelical religion*.” We do not propose simply to promote sobriety, social order, or morality, but religion; and not religion merely, but *evangelical* religion. When I speak of evangelical religion, I mean gospel religion, a religion that is consonant with the principles and precepts of the gospel of Jesus Christ. To promote this end, we have provided in our Constitution: 1st. That the Association shall be forever under the control of evangelical christian men. The Constitution provides for three classes of members. The first class are called *active members*. Any young man who is a member of an evangelical church may become an active member by the pay-

ment of one dollar annually. These alone have the right to vote and to hold office. The second class are called *associate members*. Any moral young man may become an associate member by the payment of one dollar annually, and be entitled to all the privileges of the Association, except the right to vote and hold office. The third class are *life members*, made so by the payment of twenty dollars or more at any one time. These may be active or associate members, in accordance with the provisions respecting these two classes.

It may be asked why we do not give all the right to vote and hold office. If we had a lower object in view, than the one which we have named, all might be safely permitted to enjoy these privileges. But with this object in view—it is evidently wise to give the control of the Association to those only who truly sympathize with it.

If our object were the promotion of any single virtue, like that of Temperance, Peace, &c., than we would invite to active membership all who sympathized with us in love of that virtue. Or if we were associated for the suppression of any single vice, we might invite to our standards all who abhor it; or if our object were mere mental improvement, we might open our doors to the controlling influence of all who sympathized in that object.

But the end aimed at is the promotion of *evangelical religion*,—an object which includes all the others, as the greater includes the less—and of course it is consistent to invite only those who sympathize with us, to unite in promoting it. This Association stands upon the same basis, as kindred organizations for the printing and distribution of bibles, tracts, religious volumes, and Sabbath School Books. The domestic Missionary Society in our own city, and various other Associations have the same basis.

It embraces the same denominations of christians, and those only. All of these societies have the same end, though they act in reference to different classes of society, and by the use of means slightly differing.

The *second* means, to effect the end in view, is an annual course of lectures; this is provided for, in Art. 4, Sec. 7 of our Constitution.

The *third* kind of means, is a reading room, and a library; provided for also under the same head. It will be seen, by referring to the list of officers, that all these departments are under the control of the active members of the Association. Of course the lectures of the Association, and the reading matter spread upon these tables, will all be designed to promote the same general object. Secular papers will be introduced here to some extent, but in the selection of them, regard will be had to their moral tone and influence.

Again, as a *fourth* means, the Constitution provides, that certain personal labors, shall be performed by the Standing Committee—composed of three individuals from each church connected with the Association. Some of the duties of this Committee, are to induce young men to connect themselves with this Association; to seek out young men and endeavor to bring them under moral and religious influences; aid them in the selection of suitable boarding places; secure their attendance at some place of worship on the Sabbath; introduce them to the Sabbath School, and by every means in their power surround them with Christian associates, and influences.

The *fifth* means, which I refer to are its monthly and special meetings provided for in article fifth, all of which are to be opened by reading the Scriptures and prayer, and closed by singing and prayer. We believe that there will be great advantages arising from bringing Christians of different denominations together, for Christian conference and prayer. The influence of their united prayers and labors, cannot be otherwise than good upon themselves and others.

I will now consider a few objections, that have been raised to our plan of organization. The first objection is, "that although we call this a Christian Association, we do not embrace in it all denominations which bear the Christian name." Our reason for this is not because we consider ourselves holier than others; we believe the true spirit of Christianity is that spirit which was manifested by the publican—"God be merciful to me a sinner"; we

have no righteousness of which to boast, no goodness to make mention of.

Our reason is not, that the sects not connected with us, do not embrace intelligent and virtuous men, men with whom we are glad to associate in all the walks of social life, men with whom we take sweet counsel in other associations for the promotion of the mental, social and moral condition of our race. But one reason is that in reference to the vital matter for which we now associate, we differ, and "how can two walk together unless they be agreed." We differ in regard to the nature, degree, guilt and punishment of sin, as well as in regard to the way of salvation.—We differ in regard to that great central doctrine which Martin Luther studied out of an old Latin Bible which he found chained to a post in the cloister—"Justification by faith alone"—by faith in Christ alone. This difference appears to us fundamental, and therefore any union between us for such an object would be forced or constrained, and therefore unprofitable to both.

We cheerfully meet with them in the formation of Lyceums, public libraries, colleges, academies and schools of learning, in associations for the promotion of temperance, peace, or anything where we have full sympathy. We only propose to remain within ourselves when we are not agreed to walk together, and in reference to this difference even, would cultivate a spirit of love and charity.

Some religious sects issue publications which I honestly believe to inculcate fundamental and fatal errors. For this reason I would not place them upon my centre-table for my children to read; and for the same reason I could not consistently introduce my sons to a *christian* association which provided them.

Another objection raised against us is, that we are intolerant and bigoted. I always look for the most marked illustrations of these unamiable qualities, in those who are most free in charging them upon others.

Toleration—is the allowance of that which is not wholly approved. Bigotry is excessive prejudice in reference to a particular religious creed, opinion, or ritual. What then have we done or

said, to warrant the application of these terms to us? Are those who charge them upon us, entirely free from such weaknesses?—The fact is, that we all live in glass houses, and should therefore be careful how we throw stones. If to hold Christian truths with a love so strong that we can only yield them with our lives, be evidence of bigotry, then we are bigots. Then the Apostles were bigots. Then martyrs for the truth of all past time were bigots. In respect to some religious truths, we must be allowed to imitate in some humble manner, the great reformer, when standing before the diet of Worms, he was pressed to accept the interpretation which the popes and the councils had given to them. “Here,” said he, “I stand! I cannot do otherwise, God help me, Amen.”

I pity the religionist who has not some principles which cannot be compromised—some truths which are worth dying for.

We ask the good men, especially the young men of this city, to give their names and their hearts, and also to consecrate of their substance to aid us in this work.

When the President had concluded, Rev. Samuel Wolcott, being called upon, rose and said—

In the appropriate and delightful portion of Scripture, which has been read here this evening—a chapter, perhaps the most exquisitely tender and beautiful to be found among all the apostolic writings—we have had presented to us the fundamental, scriptural principle, on which this Association rests.

As a *Christian* Association, the highest end which we naturally propose to ourselves, is the spiritual improvement of the young men of this city. We seek their social improvement; we seek their intellectual and moral improvement; but above all, we seek their spiritual improvement. Now if I understand the argument of the apostle, in the prosecution of a spiritual object, for the attainment of spiritual results, charity, divine love, the grace of Christ in the heart, must be the impelling power. Without this vital principle, this inward grace, however zealous and extraordinary our outward exertions might be, however showy and boastful our pretensions, however plausible and captivating our speech,

though we could discourse in the tones of an eloquence more than human, could even speak with the persuasive accents of an angel's voice, it were all as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal—the hollow sound of an instrument played upon by some cunning performer; not the free, melodious utterances of an earnest, living soul, glowing with love to Christ and love to man. We find here a scriptural warrant, a divine sanction for the great work which we propose—seeking a spiritual end by spiritual means; depending for spiritual results upon a spiritual agency. I could not but be struck with the felicitous application of the passage to the presiding principle of our Association.

There are, as it seems to me, three important objects which this Association is happily adapted to secure. Besides the high end which it directly seeks, there are two incidental results which it is destined, with the blessing of God, to achieve, and which are entitled to be ranked among its leading beneficent effects. I shall touch upon them but briefly, as we are waiting to hear from our friend whose presence here is so welcome to us all, the venerable President of our University (Dr. Wayland.)

The first of these, is the spirit of Christian fellowship, co-operation, and union among the members of the Association. This fellowship has its basis in a common religious experience, and could not exist without it. And as the fruit of this experience, there is a harmony of doctrinal sentiment, among us, on all the vital points of Christianity. It is one of the features of the system of evangelical truth, which stamps it with divinity, that the spiritual exercises and emotions, and religious sentiments of those who cordially embrace it in all ages and climes, and among all classes and varieties of men, are identical. We never take up the biography of any man, woman, or child, whose heart has been renewed by the Holy Spirit, without being impressed with this truth. We open our missionary journals, and in the narrative of some convert from heathenism, just emerging into the light of Christianity, and confiding as a sinner in his Divine Redeemer, we recognize the spiritual struggles and processes of which we have ourselves been conscious, and which have marked the act of con-

version, as observed in others around us ; and those lately benighted idolater, still ignorant of everything but the way of life, and the intelligent missionary who had imparted to him the truth, find themselves in possession of a common treasure, and sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. So the members of this Association, coming together from the two dozen different churches which are represented in it, find themselves pervaded with the glow of a common religious sensibility. There are points of speculative belief on which we differ, and these differences are neither merged, nor slighted. We severally adhere to our individual convictions on various questions which we deem important in their place, and have no disposition to surrender. But these are not essential points ; they do not relate to fundamental truths ; they touch but slightly, if at all, our religious experience. And therefore, with no little diversity of sentiment in minor things, being fully agreed in the more important matters, there may be, and there is among us, fraternal fellowship, free and joyful communion. This delightful spirit of Christian confidence and co-operation is not a result which we directly sought ; it would probably have mocked our pursuit, and eluded our embrace, had we sought it thus mechanically. It is no artificial union, not an union for the sake of union, no forced attempt to procure from one another Christian recognition and endorsement. We were not thinking of ourselves ; we came together for an object out of ourselves, sufficiently high and holy to elicit our warmest sympathies and most strenuous exertions. In the prosecution of this object, with our attention fixed on those whom we hope to reach and bless by a combined and concentrated effort, we find ourselves drawn irresistibly together, and our hearts are joined in sweet and sacred bonds. We realize the strength, beauty, and blessedness of the tie which unites the disciples of Christ, of every name, in spiritual brotherhood. This I apprehend to be true *Christian Union* ; and the memorable prayer of our Saviour is thus accomplished:—
 “ That they all may be one ! ”

The second object to which I referred, is the one defined in our Constitution as the leading aim of this Association ; viz : the in-

tellectual, moral, and spiritual improvement of young men. It is one on which I need not dwell; it commends itself to every mind. I am more and more persuaded, that direct, personal appeal is the method which divine wisdom has selected for reclaiming and saving the world; that upon the followers of Christ is devolved the duty, under God, of winning men to the truth by personal solicitation. Permit me to say here, that I have read with great interest the recent discourse of our friend who is to follow me, (President Wayland) on the "Apostolic Ministry," and subscribe heartily to its leading idea, that the business of converting men is not to be confined to a particular class, but that every disciple is to be enlisted in the work, and according to his opportunities is to be a faithful personal witness for Christ. It was in this way that the early Christians propagated their faith; and while other means are valuable, this is undoubtedly the most effective. The printed page utters no tone of feeling, and beams with no look of sympathy. Its statements may be clear and convincing; but they lack that element of persuasion which kindles in the features and falters in the voice. It is when the heart of a man, addressing his fellow-men, is seen in his looks, and heard in his accents that a response is sure to be given. For this reason, unquestionably, this personal service has been committed to all the disciples, and they are to go to one and another of their impenitent friends, saying to each with an affectionate solicitude, and a winning tenderness, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." And here, Sir, lies the great mission of your Association. I am not so much a stranger in this city, as not to see and feel that there is a work to be done here, among our young men, worthy of this Association, and which now implores the united prayers and labors of its members. I see before me the waving grain, field upon field, ready to nod to the reaper's sickle. Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest; behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest.

There is a third object, to which I have referred. We are to

cherish this Association, not only because it unites our hearts in Christian fellowship and love, and because it is fitted, with the divine blessing, to promote the highest well-being of young men, but also because another and weighty responsibility has been placed upon it. I cannot better express this, than in the words of the Psalmist, "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." To this Association is committed the high trust, from which it may not shrink, of bearing testimony for the truth as it is in Jesus. I feel that I may with special propriety address to this body the words of the apostle to the Christians at Philippi, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Since our Divine Master came into the world, his followers have been called to bear reproach; and usually, in proportion to their fealty to him and their fidelity to their principles, has been their experience of "the fellowship of his sufferings."—And it is enough for the disciple, that he be as his Master. We are also to be like him in spirit. We cannot descend into the arena of controversy. While we keep aloof from all compromise with error, and are unflinching in our adherence to our convictions of the truth and the right, we are to cultivate a kind and courteous bearing in all our intercourse with others. We must seek, in our daily deportment, to realize that high achievement of grace—the *firmness of Christian principle, perfectly combined with the sweetness of Christian courtesy*. In this respect, as in others, we may imitate the example of him, of whom it has been observed, with equal truthfulness and appositeness. "His all-perfect character demonstrated his Messiahship. He was so pure, and yet so social withal; so unbending in principle, and yet so bland in manners withal; so tried by calamity, and yet so patient withal. Although he was borne from the cradle to the cross, as it were on the hurdle of poverty, by the wild horses of slander and persecution, neither agony, nor ignominy could alienate him from his mission, nor alter the force of his character. Like light he passed through every medium, uncontaminated." In the dissemination of his principles, we are to be imbued with his spirit;

and in the work of extending his kingdom in the world, we will remember, for our encouragement, that we rally under the banner of the captain of our salvation, which has never drooped in battle and will never trail in defeat.

It has been my pleasure Christian friends, to meet most of you before, in connection with some moral enterprise, adapted to promote the welfare of society ; and I trust that we, and others of our fellow-citizens, who heartily sympathize with the moral movements of the day, may often meet in that relation as cheerful co-workers. But I am sure, Sir, that as representatives of the churches of Christ, we have never met on any occasion so hallowed as this. The feeling which pervades this assembly we may hail as a token that the smile of Heaven will rest upon the labors of our Association. And such a gathering as this we may regard as a type of that future and blissful reunion, when the minor shades of belief, which now separate us into different religious communions, will have disappeared, and we shall see eye to eye ; when we shall see the King in his beauty, and be changed into his glorious image.

Rev. Robert Allyn next addressed the Association, as follows :

Mr. President :—I rise with some diffidence to address this interesting audience. I could not but be struck with the appropriateness of the chapter, read by yourself, at the opening of this meeting, as well as with the justness of the remarks, made by the reverend gentleman, who preceded me. It appears to me that there is but a simple idea, and the illustration of that simple idea, in the whole word of God—the idea of LOVE ; LOVE coming down from God to man, and ascending from man to God ; LOVE falling from heaven in multiplied blessings , and returning in devout thanksgivings and holy tempers, from man's heart to the great Author of all his mercies ; like the ascent and descent of the angels, upon the ladder which the old patriarch saw, as he slept under the open sky in the vale of Bethel—and LOVE going out, from the heart of every man to the hearts of all other men, and returning from all hearts to the heart of the one man ; like the heat or electricity which sleeps in all bodies ; if the heat is

found excessive in one thing, this imparts to all around it, and if excessive in all surrounding things, they impart to it. Thus a constant giving and receiving is going on at all times around us. So with the Love of the gospel of Jesus. It falls from God on man, and rises again from man to God; it flies from one heart to all hearts, and returns from all hearts to the one heart. This is the cardinal idea or sentiment of Christian Union, to which allusion has already been made; it is the basis of *our* union, as we come together we find the ground on which we may stand to work for the cause of righteousness and truth.

We come together different denominations of christians, and I am not to complain that we are different. For my own part, I am a Methodist, and I expect to remain such as long as I live; and, Sir, I understand you are a Congregationalist, and I expect you to remain such. Early education, accidental associations, constitutional temperament may have made me what I am. And it is desirable that these things should have their influence on us. We can live as we are, we can love each other on earth, and hope for the same heaven. And if we reach that heaven, and find that, then and there, we differ in opinion, somewhat as we do here, we then can discuss our differences without wrangling; for we shall not have the infirmities and ill-tempers, caused by the body tempting us to quarreling and hating. Besides, if we perform our whole duty here, we shall be too busy to spend much time and energy, in discussing minor points of doctrine and difference. So let us love each other, and work together on earth, and wait till we get to heaven for our discussions, where all is peace and harmony. But, if we, as different denominations, will contend on earth, let it be a contest to see who shall love most and perform the greatest amount of labor for the salvation of our fellow men.

Sir, I understand it to be the grand object of this Association, to promote christian love and fellowship, which seem to me to have been too much confined within the circle of individual churches. If I read the word of God aright, every converted man should share our sympathies and our affections. In the chap-

ter preceding the one read at the commencement of these services, St. Paul specially inculcates this idea. He calls the Christian Church "one body," and insists, "that we are members of one another." In his epistle to the Ephesians he tells us that "we are members of Christ's body, of his flesh, and of his bones," indicating by this language the closeness of that union, which is supposed to exist—which does exist—between Christ and his followers, and which ought to exist among Christians. According to these figurative expressions, there are no different persons, belonging to different and jealous denominations, holding peculiar tenets and doctrines,—we are not separate and contending persons, if God's Word speaks truly and plainly, for "we are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

Jesus is the head, and we the bodily members. And just as we feel, that our hands, feet and limbs are part and parcel of us, and have a common interest in each other and each others health and welfare, so is every christian a part of Christ, and has a common interest in the weal and affections of every other christian. My hand, or eye, or tongue, belongs to me, and I, in a certain sense, to each; and I can, in nowise, separate my sympathies and interests from each, So when my brother,—be he Congregationalist, or Baptist,—belongs to Christ, I cannot separate him from my sympathies and regards. He becomes a member of Christ, as much as I am, and his welfare is mine, his interests, mine, his christian progress mine. "We are not our own, we are bought with a price," and all belong to Christ in a spiritual sense, and in him "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, but all are one in Christ Jesus." This idea I consider the central idea and element of Christianity;—this brotherhood;—this *oneness*.

These thoughts most directly point out to us the duty of efforts, to aid our fellow-men in all the possible ways, in which we can promote their interests. They indicate that our brother's interests should be as dear to us as our own, and should be sought with the same zeal and energy. A brother's character is as precious to us as our own, and should be defended from aspersions

and guarded from contact with evil, just as vigilantly and with as much solicitude, as we watch over and guard our own. Our brother's improvement and elevation, is of exactly the same consequence to us and to the Church, as is our own, and should be encouraged and promoted with the same attention, as we would use in seeking our own. These thoughts teach us that there is not a man in the universe, but who if brought to Christ, may enjoy the same blessed relationship to us and to the Church, as we ourselves enjoy and hope for,—sons of God and heirs of heaven—children of Divinity and brothers of Humanity. We are then to go, as in the parable, into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in. I believe, Sir, this to be the object of this Young Men's Christian Association, and gladly do I hail it as an instrumentality of Christ.

The truth is, Mr. President, as christians, members of Protestant churches, we have been too much distinct and isolated. We have been discussing—too often quarrelling—and our common enemy has crept in by an insidious march, and is making fearful inroads upon the liberties and independence of freemen. I allude of course to the encroachments of the Romish Church—a church which cannot exist in any community, without degrading that manly independent spirit which belongs to republican citizens. I hail this Association as affording a high ground, where we may all come and join against that deadly foe of true religion, humanity, and improvement. And while the Church of Rome wars upon the education and republican institutions of our country, I trust, Sir, that here among these young men, the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up a standard against her.

I was not, Mr. President, displeased with the modesty which led you at the opening of these services, to apologise with some evident embarrassment, for conducting religious exercises, a layman, in presence of so many clergymen. But I could not fully agree that such diffidence, or any excuse was needed. Sir, it is, a doctrine, and a practice of my own church, that laymen shall preach as well as ministers. Why should not a layman take charge of the conduct of a religious meeting? They are the

members of Christ's body as well as clergymen, and have a very important duty to discharge in spreading the gospel. Let them not be ashamed of such a work as this. This was alluded to by my brother yonder, (Rev. Mr. Wolcott) as being the doctrine of the sermon of our venerable friend, (Rev. Dr. Wayland,) that laymen have as much responsibility in the conversion of the world as clergymen. I hold that the preacher performs a very important work; that the church could not even live without him; for "how can they hear without a preacher?" But I also hold, that an association like this, should teach all men, that every one must *labor* to promote the interests and spread the truths of the gospel. We have had preaching enough, if preaching alone would do it, to have accomplished the work of converting the world.—We still want preaching, more fervent, eloquent, and powerful, than we have ever yet heard in the world. But we also want laymen to preach by example every day of the seven, while the minister preaches by his voice only one. We want laymen to go out and do *business* for God, and thus introduce the principles and practices of christianity into every day business life. It is generally considered a preacher's business, to spend the week in writing out, or in thinking out sermons for the Sabbath:—and he acquires consideration and importance, in the eyes of the community by this his work. And a layman may do business as a merchant, a mechanic, or an artizan, and acquires consequence by amassing wealth or distinction. While the preacher is employed in speaking the word of life, exclusively for God and the good of his fellow-men, the layman is doing business, not altogether for God and mankind. These latter seek for riches, for political elevation, for great social influence to the neglect of the interests of the church, and often to the injury of the community.

Now I want laymen in the church who shall consecrate themselves to the services of the sanctuary, and devote the gains of their business to the Lord, who has redeemed them; and who shall feel that duty requires them to do business on gospel principles, and make their influence as christians run through every department of their lives. I hail this Association as an omen,

that the laymen of the church are awaking to the responsibilities which rest upon them. I rejoice in what I expect from the influence it is to exert, in the busy avenues of trade and commerce, and in every walk in society. Ministers are expected to go into their studies, and think, read and write, and consecrate the fruits of their labors and toils to God. They lay themselves on the altar of sacrifice in the morning and pray for guidance; and at night they are to renew the sacrifice, and to bring with it and lay upon the altar, all the product of their meditations. Now we need business men who shall do likewise, and consecrate their souls and all to God on the altar of morning prayer, and bring their gains at night to the same altar, and give them to God, who had made their business to prosper—men who thus co-operate with the ministry, and make religion prominent on “change,” as well as in the house of prayer. Christianity should be the ruling influence in this world, *and Christian business men must make it so*. They must preach it by word and doctrines, by works and examples, and reiterate each lesson in theory or in practice, till the principles of Jesus the Nazarene become omnipotent in every sphere—in social life—in domestic life—in business life—and in political life, throughout the whole earth.

Rev. Mr. Allyn's remarks were followed by an address from Dr. Wayland, President of Brown University, as follows:—

Mr. President:—I rise Sir, rather to express my interest in this organization than to add anything to the eloquent and forcible remarks to which you have just listened. It is evident that there is occasion for the establishment of some Association of this character. It is evident to every person who has seriously considered the matter, that the number of conversions in this city, for many years past, has been exceedingly small and that the young men of our city have been growing without experiencing the sanctifying influences of the grace of God. This state of things has pressed heavily upon the minds of Christian men; until they have begun to feel that some greater effort, some more universal effort, some more direct and positive effort, adapted to bring religion directly home to the hearts and feelings of every man, was

absolutely necessary. As christian men have looked abroad upon this state of things, they have been led to feel, that each individual had something to do ; that it was not enough that the minister should preach a sermon upon the Sabbath, and then go home and spend the week in preparing another sermon. They are beginning to see that this would never convert the world, that such a course would never convert the city of Providence, and as we are more easily influenced by persons of our own age, who have shared in our own experimence, it has naturally come to be considered that young men who had themselves experienced the grace of God, were more especially called upon to endeavor to lead others to the knowledge of God. For we do believe that we are all travelling rapidly to eternity, that we are all sinners against God, that we must all appear at the judgment seat of Christ, to give an account of the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil ; and that without the pardoning grace of God through Jesus Christ no human being can be saved. We believe also, that God in his Providence makes use of men to convey the message of salvation to other men. Hence it was felt to be the duty of every man to use his influence to a greatly increased extent, and to make an effort by persuasion and by every means that God has granted him to bring men to a knowledge of the truth, and thus save them from the doom that awaits the ungodly.

This as I regard it, was the foundation, the beginning, the germinal point in the organization of this Association. It was felt that while individuals might labor with great effect, yet by a union still more could be accomplished, and thus they might combine the various influences which otherwise could not be exerted. I have been interested in this Association from the beginning. I have found that there was a difference of opinion as to the course to be pursued ; some individuals have thought that they could labor in one manner, and some in another. With respect to this I suppose the true principle is "Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind." If one man thinks he can labor to more advantage by pursuing a different course let him labor, we wish him

well; if he cannot labor in one way he is perfectly free to labor in some other way. Let us cultivate no feelings of antagonism. We will go on in the direction in which we feel called upon to labor, our object being to save the souls of men. If the souls of men are saved, everything else will take its natural position. This Association originated in the idea, that all evil, misery and crime in this world springs in the beginning from the alienation of the heart from God, and that if we can only bring men to a knowledge of God, and—as has just been alluded to—have that love of God which shall manifest itself in the life, if a man loves God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself, the whole work of reformation is done. If this principle does not find its place in the heart, all other reformation fails. This I suppose is the principle on which you are united; it is an effort on your part to extend the knowledge of God among men, to invite men to love and serve God, to repent of their sins to be united to Christ by a living faith.

This being the principle of your union, of course will imply that you are united for other purposes also—to improve each others minds, furnish means for good reading, the diffusion of general intelligence, and thus make you better acquainted with your relations to God and your relations to each other. How is this to be accomplished? I know that it is common to think that if you form an Association you can do almost anything, but gentlemen, that paper which contains your constitution will never accomplish anything; an *organization* will never do anything; all that is done will be done by each individual member of the Association. If you rely upon the Association to do the work, it never will be done; this work must be done by each member going forth and trying to spread the knowledge of Christ and the vital influences of the gospel.

Let me then urge this upon you, for you have a great work before you. Now, what should be the object, what the aim of such an Association as this? Nothing less than the subjection of the whole city to Christ. Have that in view at all events, and I do say, that when we consider the blessing that God gives to faith-

ful labor, that the christians of this city are abundantly able to go in and possess the whole land. Every one of you in his place of business, in all his walks of usefulness, should be impressed with this idea,—my business is to save the soul of my brother.—Make everything bend to this, everything subordinate to this end, everywhere bearing testimony to the excellency that there is in Christ Jesus. Why should not this Association, with the means of thus extending the knowledge of Christ to every part of our city, be the instrument of bringing hundreds and thousands to a knowledge of the truth?

Let me then urge you to take the largest possible view of your duty. Look at this whole city as the field of your labor; and especially consider every young man, as one whom you are called upon to labor for, to pray for, and by every possible means in your power to lead him to Christ; and if this be done, who can measure the results that will spring from the formation of this Association? Here let me suggest another idea. All our means will be useless unless accompanied by the grace of Jesus Christ. If the spirit of God descends and rests upon these labors, if the spirit of God shall put that word into your mouth which shall penetrate the heart of your brother; if God shall cause the seed which you sow to spring up and bring forth fruit, and that fruit thus brought forth be seed again, who can measure the blessing that must result. Then let us always bear this in mind,—that this Association is nothing unless we have individual effort and that individual effort is nothing only, as it is accompanied by the spirit of the living God; and that God has promised us over and over again that wherever his word is preached, whether by clergyman or layman—I would rather say by christian men—it shall be always accompanied with the power of the Holy Ghost.

Let this then be our confidence, let this be our trust, let us labor, feeling that our effort is nothing but that all is the power of God. Then we shall labor successfully, then shall this Association be the birthplace of multitudes of souls of young men who will grow up and rejoice that they have been united with you; your efforts will increase and redouble until the handful of corn

upon the top of the mountains shall flourish and the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon, and this city shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

After Rev. Dr. Wayland closed his remarks, a dedicatory prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Leavitt. Then the following original ode was sung with much spirit :

Woodland.

Arabia's flowers perfume the air
 With incense rich and sweet—
 O God ! more fragrant be our prayer
 Before thy mercy seat.

Grant us the wisdom of the good,
 Our *purpose* consecrate ;
 And help us plead Christ's precious blood,
 In work of love so great.

We aim to watch the Shepherd's fold,
 Lest any inmate stray ;
 And like the youthful David bold,
 Retake the captive prey.

We aim to guard the youthful heart,
 Enlighten youthful mind—
 Direct their energies aright,
 A blessing to mankind.

O may our light shine wide and far,
 Like that of Zion's hill,
 And, as the beam of guiding star,
 A thousand bosoms thrill,

Rev. R. H. Conklin, then addressed the Association as follows :
 I was impressed some years ago with an incident, which in my mind is an excellent illustration of christian character as it *should* be exemplified in an Association like this. When we look at the work of human redemption, in connexion with the agency of the spirit, which God bestows on the labors of his servants, we find it much more simple and easy, than is generally supposed. I make this passing remark for the purpose of conveying a clear understanding of what I shall relate. A Deacon of my church (Dea-

con Wardwell) while speaking on this very point, in one of meetings a short time since, made an estimation like this. "Suppose fifty individuals imbued with the spirit of Harlan Page, each charges himself with the responsibility under God, of leading one soul to Christ during the coming year! Then we have as the result one hundred christians at the commencement of the next year; and suppose that one hundred continue the same course of effort, the next year; we shall then have two hundred; the next year four, the next eight, the next sixteen, and in less than fifty years the whole world would be converted." Now if we should follow out exactly this ratio of progress, how long would it take this Association, with this measure of success, to accomplish effectually what was urged upon us by one of our speakers—namely, the evangelization or subjection of this entire city to Jesus Christ? Is it too much for a christian young man, imbued with the spirit of his master, to labor for the salvation of one soul?

Centuries since, a large company of individuals passing over a vast desert became much straitened for want of water. They were almost on the point of famishing; they had travelled all day suffering greatly from thirst, and as the sun declined in the West, they alighted, pitched their tents, and sent runners out in every direction to seek for water; worlds for water! After a strict search the runners returned and reported that no water could be found. Morning came again! They arose, struck their tents and travelled on, weary and oppressed and almost ready to die. Still the sun again lay low in the West. Again they alighted, pitched their tents and sent out their runners in every direction; still no water could be found. How dreadful! Their bones might bleach upon the desert, there was no succor at hand! Still more weary, and almost ready to lay down and die, they proceeded another day on their journey, and at its close tried once more their former experiment. One individual who had wandered to a greater distance from the encampment, saw a distant elevation that indicated vegetation, and the possibility of water occurred to his mind at once. He soon reached the place, and at his feet ran a clear beautiful crystal stream,—pure, sparkling and, Oh! how

precious in his sight. On those shelving rocks above, hung a few blades of grass, and on the ends of those blades of grass hung drops of water, so precious to him now that he could not bear to see a drop wasted, so he put his mouth underneath the blades of grass, jostled them slightly and caught the glittering drops upon his parched tongue. He could not wait to drink more, but turns toward the famishing camp and cries out at the top of his voice—Water! Water! Oh! what a sound was that! The thirsty traveller was well aware of his own wants, but had barely tasted the delicious beverage, when with the spirit of true philanthropy he turns to his perishing comrades, unwilling to slake his own dreadful thirst, till they could enjoy this delicious and long-sought for blessing with him. So of the christian who has drank from the fountain of life, and whose benevolent soul gushes with generous sympathy for a lost perishing world.

Eighteen hundred years ago, a remarkable young man appeared in the Christian church,—a man who subjected himself to more self-denial, accomplished more labor, and I doubt not that the judgment of the coming great day, will exhibit greater results wrought out by him, than almost any other mortal man.—This young man was once an enemy to the living God; and while on his way to a certain place, on a mission of persecution and death, Jesus Christ our Lord, revealed himself to him in a most remarkable manner. He had only to be *convinced* of the fact that *it was* the Saviour, and he bowed imploringly before his Lord, and tremblingly asked the question, “*Lord what wilt thou have me to do?*” He received the answer of the Saviour and sped on his new mission, and labored as man hardly ever labored before or since, until his earthly mission was accomplished. When in his course, an answer seemed to be demanded to the question—how he could endure so great a degree of hardship, persecution, and privation, willing to suffer the loss of all things for Christ? The answer was summed up in this expressive and significant declaration, “The love of Christ constraineth *us*” as if to say, I am not the favorite of Heaven alone; the same principles and spirit pervades all the disciples of our blessed Lord. Now let

this spirit,—as my brother on the right (Dr. Wayland) remarked, let this spirit, I say, pervade this Association, and what may not be the results in a single year ?”

When I was quite a small lad, I used to think that it was the *thunder* that struck, but after I had gained a little more knowledge, I learned that that was simply the result—the report. It is the lightning that you need my friends and not the thunder ! That is, God’s *moral* electricity ; the lightning power and influence of God’s holy spirit, that alone can vitalize and gives moral life and spiritual energy to human life, human character and human activity. If this Association seeks that high endowment of Heaven—the baptism of the Spirit of God, you will certainly make an impression on this city that shall be as abiding as eternity to come. And in the dim future, when you shall have looked over the record of the past, and cast the mind’s eye back to this evenings opportunity, and observed the hallowed influence gathered here on this occasion ; will it not be joyful,—joy indescribable, that here you consecrated, yourselves and these apartments, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to the glorious work and service of carrying out the mission of Jesus Christ in the world !

After Rev. Mr. Conklin had concluded, Mr. Gilbert Richmond rose and said :

Mr. President—I know Sir, that on account of the lateness of the hour, I ought perhaps to refrain from saying anything at the present time. But I will only add a single remark, to what has already been spoken. I wish to occupy a moment as a layman. I suppose that every church member here to-night has felt the force of the remarks of my venerable and respected friend, Dr. Wayland, in regard to the want of revivals of religion at the present day. But what is the prominent fact with respect to these revivals, what impression has been made upon every mind that thinks of this matter ; but the alarming fact that our young men in this city are growing up strangers to God and the covenants of grace. To me Sir, this thought is more appalling, in regard to the want of revivals, than any other. It strikes me to-night

that there is a beam of light with respect to this particular point, breaking in upon us. For this cause I rejoice in the formation of this Association. Having in view this point I have lent my name to the Association, and feel heartily willing, according to my means, to contribute to sustain its pecuniary interests. I know that here are congregated a large number of our young men, not from any one church or denomination, but from the various denominations in the city, who come together to pray for the advancement of this good work. They come together to pray!—This to my mind, is one of the most interesting features connected with this organization. The idea of a column of prayer ascending monthly, if not weekly, from the hearts connected with this Association, is well calculated to inspire us with faith in the success of our enterprise.

In illustration of this point let me state a fact. Those among us, who lived in Providence from 1825 to 1835, if they cast their eyes back, will remember that a portion of that time was very much like this time. It was a time of dearth, a time of the long continued withdrawal of divine influences; the city seemed to be given up to worldliness, sensuality and vanity; the hearts of God's people were filled with mourning, so few came to the solemn feasts of Zion. So small were the number who were converted in 1828 and 1829, that a few christians in this city took the matter into serious consideration. The great question which was brought before their minds, was—What can be done to promote the revival of God's work in this city? This was just after the organization of the Sunday School Union and the Tract Society; this little band met together and concentrated their thoughts upon one point, in view of which they offered much prayer and bestowed much labor. They joined themselves together and took up the tract distribution and resolved to go out with them, and meet men, women and children, at their hearths, by their firesides, by the way, speak a kind word to them, whenever it was possible, pray for them and leave with them their little tracts. Some who are here present, remember this organization. And what were the results? About one hundred and twenty

young females, and some pious young men—for there were but few of the young men of the city in our churches at that time—took hold of the work in earnest, and consecrated themselves to God and then to their tract. This little army of a hundred and twenty or thirty, went to work from house to house, and my venerable friend (Dr. Wayland) remembers, and some pastors present recollect, how God poured his spirit down in 1830, '31, '32 and '33 upon this city. I see some before me to-night, who have reason to thank God for the instrumentalities then used.

Men of large experience, men of purpose, men of God come here to-night to sympathize with you Mr. President, and with these young men in this great work. I mention this fact for the encouragement of these young men, and for the encouragement to our own hearts, as an illustration of the great truth; that in proportion to the labors of the people of God, accompanied by prayer and a keen sense of dependence on the divine spirit, will be the blessing we shall receive from the Almighty.

I hail the coming year as one of hope and expectation, and it is easy to discern this hope kindling in our breasts to-night. I remarked not long since,—while speaking on this subject in one of our church meetings—that I never felt so strong a desire to go back thirty years, and take hold of this work with the vigor of a young man, as I did then. I still have feelings, but my energies are not all baptized with the dew of youth, or with the ardor and freshness of early years. I feel sensible that I have passed that age, yet I will give you the strength of manhood. I offer you my heart and my hand, and God helping me, you shall have my prayers and all else that I am able to do.

At the conclusion of Mr. Richmond's remarks, the hymn given below was sung :

Olmütz.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

Blest be the tie, that binds
Our hearts, in christian love,
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne,
We pour our ardent prayers ;
Our fears our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear ;
And often, for each other, flows
The sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part,
It gives us inward pain ;
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again.

The exercises were then closed by a benediction from Rev. Mr. Field.



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